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THE NORWICH MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(From our own Reporter.)

Norwich, Sept. 24.

THE 10th anniversary of the Norfolk and Norwich Musical Festival was inaugurated on Tuesday night by a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music at St. Andrew's-hall. The object of this meeting, which in grandeur and importance may be compared to that of Birmingham, is to assist the funds of the principal charities in the county and the capital. The festival, which is held triennially, has generally been well supported, not only by the clergy, nobility, and gentry of the vicinity, but by the townsmen of Norwich, who show a proper interest in the great and useful charities it helps to enrich.

It is unnecessary to repeat what was published in the notices of the last meeting (1848), concerning the history and progress of the Norwich Festival, since its establishment about 30 years ago. The festival was to have been held last year, but owing to the absence in America of Mr. Benedict, the conductor, who is regarded in this town with the esteem due to his distinguished merits, and to the attraction of the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace, which drew so many of the inhabitants of town and country to London, the committee, fearful that the charity might suffer, postponed the meeting for a twelvemonth—a step which proves to have been highly judicious. As the Birmingham Festival was rendered famous by the original contributions of Mendelssohn, so has the Norwich Festival won honour and renown through the instrumentality of Spohr, the other great modern composer of sacred oratorios, whose *Fall of Babylon*, &c., were first given at Norwich under the direction of the composer. No novelty from such illustrious pens marks the history of the present meeting; but in their absence it has been signalized by the production of two original works by English composers, who, whatever their merits, are comparatively unknown; a new oratorio in three parts, entitled *Israel Restored*, by Dr. W. R. Bexfield; and another new oratorio in three parts, called *Jerusalem*, by Mr. H. Hugh Pierson, which exclusively occupied the programme on Wednesday.

Dr. Bexfield is a native, we believe, of this city, where in his boyhood he formed one of the choir of the cathedral. He studied composition under Mr. Buck, the present organist of the cathedral, a gentleman of high musical attainments. Dr. Bexfield, who has written a great many anthems and other sacred pieces, took his degree as Doctor of Music at Oxford,

but it was not till eight months ago, when his oratorio of *Israel Restored* was performed at St. Andrew's-hall by the members of the Norwich Choral Society, that he appeared before the public as a composer. The success of this work on that occasion authorized the committee in giving their fellow-townsmen at the festival a second and better chance of being appreciated. Mr. Pierson will be remembered as having been the predecessor of Mr. Donaldson as Professor of Music in the University of Edinburgh. When Mr. Sterndale Bennett, who disputed the post so closely with the present occupant, resigned the contest, his supporters transferred their votes to Mr. Pierson, and that gentleman was elected by a small majority. He did not long retain the chair, however. The disagreement between the medical and legal professors about the manner in which the bequest of the late Dr. Reid should be employed did not appear to please him. He considered that the large sum of money left by Dr. Reid, should be disposed of according to Dr. Reid's expressed wish—viz., to maintain a chair of music honourably, and to defray the expenses of an annual concert on a grand scale, to be held in Edinburgh, under the title of the "Reid Concert." The lawyers and physicians, however, thought otherwise, and Mr. Pierson resigned his place. He then went to Germany, and composed an opera, entitled *Leila*, which was performed at Hamburgh three nights in succession, and withdrawn by himself, for what reason did not transpire. Mr. Pierson's early studies were successively directed by three English professors—Mr. Attwood, Mr. A. T. Corfe, and Professor Walmesley, of Cambridge. His advisers in Germany were Rinck and Tamaschek. He is highly patronized at Norwich; and much more was looked for in *Jerusalem*, than the essay of a tyro. It appears that the oratorios of Dr. Bexfield and Mr. Pierson were both submitted to the committee of the Norwich Festival, and there was so strong a party for each, that to put an end to dissension, both were accepted. We cannot help thinking that the interest of a great festival—the chief support of a number of useful charities, being concerned, it was, *a priori*, to say the least, unwise in the managers to risk two new oratorios, both on a large scale, and both by untried composers. The result, for the sake of all parties, nevertheless, completely justified the policy. *Israel Restored* was preceded by the festival anthem, "Let God arise," of Mr. Henry Leslie, which was performed with such well-merited success, at Mr. Hullah's monthly concerts in St. Martin's Hall. Dr. Bexfield conducted his own oratorio; while Mr.

Pierson, we think judiciously, consigned his work to the greater knowledge and experience of Mr. Benedict.

The principal singers engaged for the festival, were Mad. Viardot Garcia, Madame Fiorentini, Miss Louisa Pyne, Miss Dolby, Miss Alleyne, Signor Gardoni, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Lockey, Signor Belletti, Herr Formes, and Mr. Weiss. Mr. Blagrove led the band at the morning, and M. Sainton at the evening performances. It was composed of 22 first violins, 20 seconds, 18 violas, 11 violoncellos, 11 double-basses, and the usual quantity of wind instruments, &c., doubled. The chorus numbered 60 trebles, 60 altos, 60 tenors, and 70 basses, which, added to the band, constituted an orchestra of 400 performers. The whole of the musical proceedings were under the direction of Mr. Benedict, than whom it would be impossible to find a professor more zealous, indefatigable, and thoroughly competent for the task.

The morning and evening performances took place in St. Andrew's Hall, a splendid Gothic edifice, situate in the centre of the town, begun by Sir Thomas Erpingham in the reign of Henry IV., and completed by his son some years after. This hall was originally the nave of a church belonging to the Black Friars. On the walls are observed a number of portraits and paintings, most of them having relation to Norwich and its civic dignitaries, and some of them both valuable and interesting. A portrait of Nelson, by Beechey, and two paintings by Martin, one on each side of it—"Edward and Eleanor," and the "Death of Lady Jane Grey"—will attract the attention of strangers. The *fêtes* of the mayor and corporation, or "Guild Feasts," were anciently held in this hall, which is very lofty, and comprises a nave and two aisles, 124 feet long and 70 wide; with the galleries that surmount the aisles, it must be capable of accommodating a vast number of persons; and this has gained for it the preference as the *locale* of the musical performances at the triennial festival over every other building in the city. The orchestra, in a recess of which a large organ forms a prominent feature in the background, is enormous, and, when filled with the vocal and instrumental performers, presents a very imposing appearance. The pillars on each side, behind which stand the members of the chorus, may perhaps somewhat impede the sound of their voices, but the general effect is clear, and there is not that excessive reverberation, so inimical to musical effect, of which we have had to complain in speaking of other buildings.

On Monday morning the rehearsal of Mr. Pierson's *Jerusalem* took place under the direction of Mr. Benedict, who was received with loud applause from all present. In the evening the music for the miscellaneous concerts was gone through at the Assembly Rooms, St. Andrew's Hall being taken up by the Monday Evening Concerts, which occur every week. On Tuesday Mr. Leslie's Anthem and *Israel Restored* were rehearsed in the hall, Dr. Bexfield conducting his own work.

The President of the festival is the Earl of Leicester, Lord

Lieutenant of the county, assisted by nearly 80 of the most influential of the clergy, nobility, and gentry of the county, as vice-presidents, among whom are the Bishop of the diocese and the Bishop of Durham. The active managing committee is composed of the following gentlemen:—Mr. Edmund Wodehouse, M. P., chairman, Mr. P. Finch, vice-chairman, Sir W. Foster, Bart., Mr. J. Barnard, Mr. F. Brown, Dr. E. Copeman, M. D., Mr. T. D. Eaton, president of the Choral Society, Mr. C. S. Gilman, Mr. W. Matchett, Mr. J. Morgan, Mr. J. R. Staff, the Rev. H. Symonds, precentor of the cathedral, Mr. J. A. Taylor, Mr. C. E. Tuck, Mr. F. J. Blake, and Mr. T. Steward, treasurers, and Mr. G. E. Simpson and Mr. R. Kerrison, secretaries.

A great number of strangers arrived in the town, and a more than usual display of the nobility was manifested. The sensation caused by the death of the Duke of Wellington has been as profound here as anywhere else. On Sunday, at cathedral service, a funeral anthem, composed by the organist, Mr. Buck, was expressly performed, the words from the burial service, "I heard a voice from heaven." This composition has much merit, and the same may be said of a "Te Deum" and "Jubilate" of the same author, which also made part of the service. A trio for boys' voices in the former, which was perfectly sung, must be especially mentioned. The efficient state of the choir in Norwich Cathedral, due to its organist, has more than once attracted the attention of those who are interested in such matters.

The concert on Tuesday was a brilliant inauguration of the festival. In spite of the rain, the attendance was one of the largest ever remembered on a first night. The nave was completely full, and the raised seats above the aisles on either side were equally well occupied. It was only at the extremity of the hall, in face of the orchestra, where other rows of raised seats almost hid the portrait of Nelson and the two pictures of Martin, that empty benches were to be seen. The fine old Hall of St. Andrew never looked more beautiful. It was admirably lighted, and the *coup d'œil*, whether taken from the body of the hall, from the raised seats, or from the orchestra, was equally dazzling and splendid. The majority of the audience were ladies, and these were attired in the most showy and tasteful manner. Mr. Benedict, on appearing in the orchestra, was honoured with an enthusiastic welcome, and the overture to *Oberon*, played to perfection, at once gave the audience an opportunity of acknowledging the power and efficiency of the band. The national anthem was then performed, Miss Louisa Pyne and Mde. Viardot Garcia singing the solo verses. The programme was as follows:—

PART I.

Overture (<i>Oberon</i>)...	...	Weber.
Quintetto—"Sento oh Dio" ..	...	Mozart.
Aria—"Ah rendimi quel cor,"	Miss Dolby	Rossi.
Song—"Fairer the meads,"	Mr. Lockey ..	Mendelssohn.

Aria—"Ha, wie will ich triumphiren," Herr Fornes	Mozart.
Duetto—Miss Louisa Pyne and Signor Gardoni (Jessonda)	Spohr.
Scena with Chorus—Madame Viardot Garcia (Orfeo)	Gluck.
Aria—Mr. Sims Reeves, "Adelaide,"	Beethoven.
Serenade—"Deh vieni alla finestra," Signor Belletti	Mozart.
Aria and Variations—Double bass—Signor Bottesini.	
Quartet—Signor Gardoni, Mr. Lockey, Signor Belletti, and Mr. Weiss	Weber.
Spanish Songs—Madame Viardot Garcia.	
Quartet and Chorus—"Light as Fairy measure," Miss Louisa, Pyne, Miss Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Herr Fornes (Euryanthe)	Weber.

PART II.

Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," read by Mrs. Fanny Kemble, with incidental music, by Mendelssohn

The only fault of this selection was its length, which would have been less perceptible had the two parts been transposed, and the entertainments commenced with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mozart's quintet, one of the gems of his undeservedly neglected opera, *Così fan tutte*, was well sung by Misses Louisa Pyne, Alleyne, Messrs. Lockey, Weiss, and Sig. Belletti; and the song of Francesco Rossi, which Miss Dolby enjoys the credit of having rescued from oblivion, showed that even the lapse of a couple of centuries is not enough to rob genuine music of its charm. The pretty ballad to which Mendelssohn's name is affixed—but which, we believe, was really composed by his sister—was nicely sung by Mr. Lockey, who would, however, have rendered it more effective by taking the time much quicker, according to the evident character of the words of the music. Herr Fornes imparted more than his accustomed fire to the exhilarating air from the *Seraglio*, and was encored unanimously. The lovely duet from *Jessonda* was thoroughly understood by Miss Pyne and Signor Gardoni; and Madame Viardot, in the dramatic and highly coloured *scena* of Gluck, showed herself, not for the first time, one of the greatest of musical declaimers. We have rarely heard "Adelaide," sung with more feeling and less false sentiment than by Mr. Sims Reeves, who was accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Benedict in a highly-finished style. The serenade from *Don Giovanni* was given by Signor Belletti as we have heard it given by no other vocalist except Tamburini. In the dearth of Don Giovanni it would perhaps be advisable to give this excellent artist a trial in the part of the Spanish libertine. Bottesini, with his unwieldy instrument, which he manages with such consummate skill, produced, as usual, a *furor*. He was encored amidst a storm of plaudits, returned to the orchestra and played some of his variations on the *Carnival of Venice*. The two quartets of Weber were both executed in a highly-efficient manner. The first was a novelty. It is a smooth piece of unambitious vocal harmony, without accompaniments, and was sung perfectly in tune. In the last, from the well-known finale to *Euryanthe*, the scale passages were given with the utmost neatness and facility by Miss L. Pyne. The quaint Spanish melodies, sung with infinite spirit and humour by Mde. Viardot, were heard with delight; the last encored and repeated. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the whole of this selection: there was not one indifferent *morceau*, nor one weak performance. It was no easy task for Mrs. Fanny Kemble to read through a long play after so brilliant

and effective a programme. She nevertheless accomplished it with facility, enchaind the attention of the audience from first to last, raised their laughter with the buffooneries of Bottom and his fellow clowns, won their sympathies for the love-sick Helena, and dragged them into fairyland to enjoy the sports of Puck, and take part in the quarrels of Oberon and Titania. We never heard Mrs. Fanny Kemble read this enchanting poem with greater point and emphasis; and as possibly she never read to so large an audience, or in so vast an arena, it is scarcely exceeding the truth to say that she never achieved a more triumphant success. The music, including the overture, *scherzo*, fairy march, duet and chorus, "Ye spotted snakes" (Misses L. Pyne and Alleyne), interlude of Hermione seeking Lysander in the wood, leading into the comic march of Bottom and his associates (first introduced in public by Jullien at Drury Lane), *notturno*, wedding march, and final chorus, "Thro' this house," was performed, under the able and intelligent direction of Mr. Benedict, in a manner to satisfy the most fastidious admirer of Mendelssohn. Of these masterpieces of feeling and description, so worthy of alliance with the poetry which Shakespeare has scattered profusely through every page of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, nothing is left to say. Praise has been exhausted on them, and, already accepted as classical models, they are beyond the pale of criticism. It was near midnight when Mrs. Fanny Kemble retired from the orchestra, amid applause hearty and long continued: 1023 tickets were sold for this concert.

On Wednesday a favourable change of weather augured well for the first morning performance in St. Andrew's Hall. The attendance, nevertheless, was not nearly so great as at the evening concert. The programme comprised Mr. Leslie's anthem, and Dr. Bexfield's oratorio. The Festival Anthem, in A major, "Let God arise," by Mr. Henry Leslie, the merits and plan of which are familiar to our readers, may be said to have been properly heard for the first time. The manner in which the opening chorus was executed, at once gave assurance that full justice would be done to the work by all engaged in its performance. The tenor solo, "Like as the smoke," and the air, "Thou, God, didst send," by Mr. Lockey, and the soprano air, "But let the righteous," by Miss L. Pyne, could hardly have been better sung. The duet in A minor, "Give thanks unto the Lord" (Miss Alleyne and Mr. Lockey), one of the passages where the influence of Mendelssohn on the mind of the composer is most strongly evident, was not so steady as the rest, and should, we think, have been taken slower. All the choruses went well. In "The Lord gave the word," the difficult episode, commencing on the words "Kings with their armies did flee," was, at least, given with clearness and decision. The final double chorus, "Sing unto God," terminating with an elaborate fugue on three subjects, came out with great effect. The performance altogether was most satisfactory. Mr. Benedict took every pains to insure a good result, and appeared quite as anxious and interested, as if the Festival Anthem had been his own. A new hearing of Mr. Leslie's work confirms the favourable impression already derived. It is certainly one of the ablest compositions in the English repertoire.

The oratorio of Dr. Bexfield may be judged without prejudice at a single hearing, since the merits it possesses lie by no means deep beneath the surface, while the faults in which it abounds are chiefly faults of inexperience. To compose an oratorio is no small thing; it is, perhaps, indeed, the most difficult task a musician can undertake. To write a good

oratorio demands learning, taste, judgment, and inventive genius in almost equal proportions. Great experience in vocal part writing, a thorough command of the science of instrumentation, a knowledge of all the secrets of counterpoint, and unshackled facility in their use, are indispensable. In short, to compose an oratorio that shall hold an honourable place among the received examples is the work of a great master, and nothing less. A proof of this is the very small number of musicians who have succeeded in this high branch of the art—Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Spohr complete the list. Beethoven should, perhaps, be added, and Mozart, although the *Mount of Olives* of the one and the *Daïde Penitente* of the other can hardly be admitted to rank among the great oratorios. That they could have excelled in this branch as they excelled in every other does not admit of a doubt; the Mass in C and the Requiem show it; but they considered that Handel had exhausted the type. Even Cherubini, whose church music is so fine, never essayed to write an oratorio. It is then no disparagement to Dr. Bexfield to say that his *Israel Restored* has no pretensions to be styled a great oratorio. It is a long oratorio, but not a great one. Nevertheless, the mere fact of having devoted so much time and attention to a task which can never repay him in a pecuniary point of view, denotes that ambition in Dr. Bexfield which proves him to be a true musician at heart. It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that we refer to the many highly meritorious passages in his *Israel Restored*—passages which, if they fail to sustain the oratorio as a standard work, will at least prevent its being utterly forgotten. The plan of *Israel Restored*, like that of the *Messiah*, is didactic; there is no story in it. The personages merely speak—they do not act. This was, we think, a mistake in our young composer, who would have done wiser in endeavouring to raise a fictitious interest for his work by means of a drama, with real personages and incidents, as in *St. Paul* and *Elijah*. The argument upon which Dr. Bexfield has built his music is as follows:—"The first part contains the prophecies concerning the Israelitish race, which are followed by God's awful threats and punishments for disobedience and unbelief. They bewail their woful state and utter their prayers. The prophecies are gradually realised. The Israelites become a happier race, and sing 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,' acknowledging Him their 'Father and Redeemer,' and lamenting their former sins. The greater end is then accomplished. Israel is restored in peace and glory, and all join in one grand song of praise." The principal singing parts, or "interpreters," as they are styled, are thus denominated in Dr. Bexfield's scheme:—Israelitish Woman (Madame Viardot Garcia), Angel (Miss Louisa Pyne), Prophetess (Miss Alleyne), Shepherdess (Miss Dolby), Prophet (Mr. Sims Reeves), Second Angel (Signor Gardoni), Priest (Herr Formes), Israelites (Signor Belletti, Mr. Lockey, and Mr. Weiss), Shepherds, Scribes, &c.

There are altogether forty-four pieces, or "numbers," in the oratorio. A detailed account will not, therefore, be expected; nor is it necessary to do more than allude to some of the most important pieces. The overture is in three movements, a *larghetto* and a fugued *allegretto*, both in the minor key, and an *andante* in the major. It is too long, but the fugue contains some clever writing. Two choruses, "Then shall he speak," and "Blow the trumpet in Zion," are both well written; but offer no other point for special remark. The tenor air, in B flat, which follows, "O Jeru-

salem," is exceedingly melodious, and scored with the greatest delicacy. This was perfectly sung by Signor Gardoni, whose pronunciation of the English words was the best we have ever heard from a foreigner. An air, in A flat, "Oh Lord, behold mine affliction," preceded by a recitative, has some beautiful points. It was admirably sung by Mad. Viardot Garcia. The chorus in the same key, which follows it, is somewhat commonplace, although the *fugato* on the words, "that rewardeth thee," &c., is clever and effective enough to redeem it. The most ambitious, and perhaps the best of the airs, is that in B minor, "They know not, neither do they understand," which has a new and ingenious accompaniment. The voice part is difficult on account of certain awkward intervals, and the modulations are extraneous; but on the whole the song is a fine one, and was sung very impressively by Herr Formes. An accompanied quartet, "Lead me, Lord," is smoothly harmonised; but the *chorale* which ends the first part, "O Lord, be gracious," is not important enough for its place. In the second part a bass air, preceded by a recitative, "Hear, O Lord" (remarkably well sung by Signor Belletti); a quartet, "O Lord, God of my salvation" (Misses Dolby and L. Pyne, Messrs. Lockey and Weiss), a soprano air, "Fear thou not" (Miss L. Pyne), and a contralto solo, with accompaniments for viola, violoncello double bass, clarinet, bassoon, flute, and horn (sung by Miss Dolby—the instrumental parts by Messrs. Hill, Lucas, Howell, Lazarus, Baumann, Card, and E. Harper), are all deserving of mention. The employment of the various instruments in the septet accompaniment is exceedingly tasteful. The idea was new, and has been ably realised. The singing of Miss L. Pyne and Miss Dolby in the two last pieces was beyond praise. A tenor recitative and air, "God shall wipe all tears," produced an evident sensation; but that, we think, was chiefly owing to the singing of Mr. Sims Reeves. The choruses in Part II. are bolder, and more ambitious, and more successful than those in Part I. Two of them, "The eternal God" (in C), and "Hath God cast away his people" (in F), exhibit, occasionally, a power of development which may some day serve Dr. Bexfield to still better purpose. There are also some charming passages in the pastoral chorus, "He that scattereth Israel;" while the final chorus, "Lift up thine eyes" (in C) has, in spite of an ineffective interlude for the brass, an elaborate fugue, and is worked up with great spirit to the climax. In a short chorus, "God called and said," Dr. Bexfield has taken for his theme an ancient Hebrew tune, much used in the Synagogue. Part III. is one of the best in the oratorio. We have, however, only time to mention the chorus, "Thou, O Lord" (in C), as being vigorous and well written; a pretty chorus of shepherds, "Happy art thou;" and the final chorus in D, for priests, Israelites, and scribes, "Marvellous are thy works," the themes of which are striking and their development able. A quartet and chorus, "Bless the Lord," and a quartet without chorus, "Praise the harp" are also entitled to favourable notice for the effective manner in which the voice parts are combined.

Dr. Bexfield has yet much to learn in the art of instrumentation; but the septet accompaniments to Miss Dolby's solo show that he has both taste and talent for it. He is too fond of long *ritornellas*, or symphonies, between the pieces. If half of these were omitted, *Israel Restored* would suffer nothing, and a good deal of time would be spared. The general execution of the oratorio was good, but would have been better if Dr. Bexfield had left the *bâton* in the hands

of Mr. Benedict. He was too nervous for his work. There was no applause during the performance, and an attempt to *encore* the unaccompanied quartet (Part I.) was suppressed; but at the end Dr. Bexfield received a flattering testimonial of the pleasure which the audience had received from his oratorio, which, as a first effort, does him infinite credit.

After the oratorio the air from *Samson*, "Ye sons of Israel now lament," the dead march, and the chorus, "Glorious hero," were performed in respect to the memory of the Duke of Wellington. The whole audience stood, and many were evidently much affected. Mde. Viardot sang the air with mingled pathos and solemnity.

Nothing could be more appropriate to the occasion than the words, which run as follows:—

"Ye sons of Israel, now lament,
Your spear is broke, your bow unbent.
Your glory's fled—
Among the dead
Our hero lies,
For ever closed his eyes."

DEAD MARCH.

Chorus.

Glorious, may thy grave
Peace and honour ever have:
And after all thy pains and woes,
Rest eternal, sweet repose."

[Press of matter compels us to postpone the remaining notice of the Festival till next week.]

HEREFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(From our own Reporter.)

(Continued from our last.)

HEREFORD, Sept. 18.

St. Paul had never previously been given at Hereford, and, though the execution was anything but perfect, the impression it made in the cathedral on Thursday was unmistakable. No less than three pieces were repeated, in obedience to the usual indication from the bishop, who, on this occasion, was only the echo of the general sentiment. These were the aria "Jerusalem, Jerusalem,"—the angel's denunciation of the people for their obstinacy and perverseness—sung with exquisite purity of intonation and feeling by Madame Clara Novello; the well-known air for *contralto*, "But the Lord is mindful of his own," which few can better understand and execute than Miss Williams; and the *duettino*, "Now we are ambassadors" (Part II.), by Sims Reeves and Formes. Although one of the most original pieces in the oratorio, this *duettino* generally passes without notice, and the fact of its being redemanded, says no little for the appreciation of the Hereford audience; added to this, we are bound to say that we never heard it so well sung before. Sims Reeves distinguished himself highly by his emphatic delivery of the recitatives of Stephen, of which the noble piece of musical declamation in the first part, "Men, brethren, and fathers"—the prophet's adjuration to the people who are about to stone him—was a striking example. Formes gave the air, "Consume them all"—where the unbelieving Saul calls down vengeance against the Christians—with immense energy, and in the pathetic air, "O God have mercy"—when the converted apostle, blind and penitent, asks pardon for his sins, and vows to preach the gospel of Christ—entered deeply into the spirit of the music. Some of the choruses went extremely well; more particularly the magnificent chorale, "Sleepers, wake! a voice is calling," which terminate the scene of the mira-

culous conversion, one of the most extraordinary inspirations of the genius of Mendelssohn. On the other hand, the beautiful chorus, "How lovely are the messengers," was sung as badly as possible, and in the chorale, "Oh, Thou, the true and holy light!" for quartet and chorus, the mass of performers, vocal and instrumental, not to omit Mr. Smith, the conductor, seemed hardly to know what they were about. The graceful *cavatina* (so termed by the composer), "Be thou faithful unto death," sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, and the violoncello *obligato*, performed by Mr. R. Hatton (substituted for Mr. Lucas, who, though at Hereford, has been prevented by illness from assisting at the performances), must be mentioned as one of the best things of the morning. The overture was admirably executed by the band, and, on the whole, this first performance of *St. Paul* in Hereford Cathedral, in spite of its many drawbacks, must be pronounced highly creditable.

The *Last Judgment*—the first, the shortest, and the best of the oratorios of Spohr—was put to a severe test in being placed immediately after such a masterpiece as *St. Paul*. It stood the test, however, right well, and the strong opposition of styles in the two great modern composers of Germany, acted as an agreeable contrast. The solo singers were Mde. Novello, Miss Williams, Mrs. Enderssohn, and Messrs. Lockey and Phillips, who were thoroughly perfect in the music, as was gratefully exemplified in the two quartets (Parts I. and II.), the last of which, "Blest are the departed," including the soprano solo, "I saw a new heaven," for Mrs. Enderssohn, a fine piece of religious harmony,—was redemanded by the bishop, to the evident satisfaction of all present. The first quartet, "Yes, every tear," in which Madame Novello's clear and resonant soprano told with thrilling effect, was equally admirable, and equally deserved the attention of the bishop, which it nevertheless failed to elicit. Mr. Phillips, to whom was intrusted the principal bass solos, was quite at home in the music, and delivered the long and elaborate recitative, "Thus saith the Lord," at the commencement of the second part, in a solemn and impressive manner. The tenor recitatives and solos could not have been declaimed with more judgment and correctness than by Mr. Lockey, who uttered the impressive sentence, "It is ended," after the terrible chorus, "Destroyed is Babylon, the mighty!"—one of the master-strokes of the oratorio—with an accent that made their meaning fully appreciated. The choruses were, on the whole, better executed than those of *St. Paul*. Mr. Smith seemed to be more familiar with them. Nothing could be better than the band in the two overtures, both of which are among Spohr's best—that to orchestral preludes—that to Part II., perhaps his best. Long as was this performance, the excellence of the music induced the crowded audience to remain until the termination of the whole, sitting and listening for five hours not merely with patience, but with evident delight. During the final chorus in the *Last Judgment*, "Thine is the kingdom," the whole assembly stood up.

The favourable change in the weather acted beneficially on the concert in the evening. The attendance was so crowded that there was speedily not even standing room in any part of the hall. The programme was as follows:—

PART I.

Symphony in A major...	...	Mendelssohn.
Part songs ...	...	J. L. Hatton.
Romance, Mrs. Enderssohn, "Le Berger"	...	Schubert.
Aria, Mr. Sims Reeves, "A te diro"	...	Donizetti.

Cavatina, Miss Williams, "Infelice affetti"	Giardini.
Bacchanalian, Herr Formes (<i>Der Freischütz</i>)	Weber.
Glee, "Blow, gentle gales" ...	Bishop.
Aria, Madame Clara Novello, (<i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i>) ...	Mozart.
Chorus, march, and dance, (<i>Jessonda</i>) ...	Spohr.

PART II.

Overture, (<i>Guillaume Tell</i>) ...	Rossini.
Air, Mr. Sims Reeves (<i>Euryanthe</i>) ...	Weber.
Glee, "Ye spotted snakes" ...	Stevens.
Trio, Madame Clara Novello, Miss Williams, and Mr. Sims Reeves, "Cruda Sorte" ...	Rossini.
Ballad, Mr. Locket, "O! give me back" ...	J. L. Hatton.
Aria, Herr Formes (<i>Seraglio</i>) ...	Mozart.
Ballads, Madame Clara Novello	
Finale, "God save the Queen" ...	Dr. John Bull.

The prevalence of light pieces makes these programmes heavy, and the audience are wearied without knowing why. We do not wish to give such an audience as that of the Shire-hall, a surfeit of "classical" music; that would be throwing pearls before swine; but we strongly advocate a larger proportion than has been administered by Mr. Smith in his programmes.

The last three movements of Mendelssohn's symphony, allowing for the total disregard of light and shade, were well executed; the *saltarelle* was taken at the proper speed, a real *presto*, and the violin passages, were played with marvellous dexterity. Owing to the absence of Mr. Lucas, the violoncellos were rather weak. The *allegro* was injudiciously curtailed, and was coarsely played; from beginning to end there was not an attempt at a piano, though the opening of the second part, introducing the fugal episode, should be *pianissimo*. The symphony would have had some chance of being appreciated, had it been placed at the beginning of the second part; as it happened, it was a sort of voluntary to play the audience into their seats. There were several encores—among others the *cavatina* of Giardini (Miss Williams); the drinking song from *Der Freischütz* (Formes); and the glee, for five voices, of Bishop (the English Glee and Madrigal Society). These occurred in immediate succession. In the second part, Madame Novello was encored in the Jacobite ballad "Bonnie Prince Charlie," which she preceded by a Scotch song of no merit. A great attempt was also made to obtain a repetition of the air from *Il Seraglio*; but Formes was over modest, and would not comply. Of Mr. Hatton's clever part-songs, which were well executed, the first, "Twilight," is the best; the second, "The tar's song," is somewhat vulgar. Schubert's plaintive romance was sung with feeling by Mrs. Enderssohn, and the clarinet *obligato* part admirably played by Mr. Williams. Sims Reeves obtained and deserved the loudest applause in the air of Donizetti (*Roberto Devereux*); and Madame Novello sang the beautiful air from *Figaro*, "Deh vieni," with the same purity of taste which won her such general admiration at Birmingham. The selection from Spohr's *Jessonda*, comprising the stirring and vigorous dance at arms, was a grateful relief to much that had preceded it, imperfect and unsteady as was its execution. The overture to *Guillaume Tell* was played, as it is always played by our English orchestras, with fire and enthusiasm; Sims Reeves was very successful in the fine air from *Euryanthe*, and the splendid trio from Rossini's almost unknown opera, *Ricciardo e Zoraide*, was one of the most irreproachable performances of the evening. We have already praised Mr. Locket's singing of Hatton's pretty ballad. At

the end of the concert the National Anthem was executed, or rather murdered. No one seemed to remember the words or to be altogether familiar with the music. At half-past 11 the benches were cleared away, and the dancers, this time inconveniently numerous, abandoned themselves with ardour to their favourite recreation. The ball was kept up till a late hour with unflagging spirit.

Yesterday morning the attendance at the cathedral was even greater than on Thursday. The magnificence of the weather threw a cheerful halo over everything; the principal streets of the old city were lined with the curious, and the cathedral looked glorious, as the sunbeams played upon its windows.

In many respects, the *Messiah* was the most satisfactory of the performances at the Cathedral. Chorus, band, soloists, conductor, and organist being equally familiar with the oratorio, there was very little chance of its going wrong, and that little did not occur. A greater number of songs were re-demanded than on any occasion we remember. "Rejoice greatly," by Madame Clara Novello; "He shall feed his flock," and "He was despised," by Miss Williams; "Behold and see," by Sims Reeves, and "Why do the nations," by Herr Formes, were all repeated at the desire of the bishop. Some of the choruses were extremely well sung, "Hallelujah!" and "Worthy is the Lamb," more especially. The only serious mistake was in "Let us break their bonds asunder," where, in consequence of Mr. Smith's beat being undecided at the commencement, some of the chorus set off, with great emphasis, before the rest; the others followed them as well as they might, and the effect bordered on the absurd. Among those pieces which merited—although, in consequence of their length, they did not receive, the compliment of an *encore* from the bishop of the diocese—were Mr. Locket's "Comfort ye my people," and Mr. Phillips's "The trumpet shall sound," with Mr. T. Harper's *obligato* accompaniment. Mrs. Enderssohn sang "I know that my Redeemer liveth," with the devotional feeling required; and equal, if not superior, to any display of the morning was the splendid air, "Thou shalt break them," which Sims Reeves sang with a power and energy that reminded many of the "veterans" present of Braham in his prime. The solo singers throughout, indeed, exerted themselves indefatigably, and with proportionate success. With this performance the musical festival terminated.

The following is a table of the number of persons who attended the Cathedral performances during the present festival and that of 1849:—

1849.			
	Raised seats.	Floor.	Aisles.
Tuesday ...	147	93	145
Wednesday ...	356	82	111
Thursday ...	218	67	75
Friday ...	253	120	222
1852.			
Tuesday ...	88	65	85
Wednesday ...	202	106	101
Thursday ...	209	131	161
Friday ...	213	75	194

From the above the comparison tells greatly in favour of the previous meeting. For the evening concerts the advantage appears on the other side:—

	1849.	1852.	
Tuesday.	165	202	Thursday.
		1852.	515
		Tickets.	General Total.
Tuesday ...	...	122	73 195
Wednesday ...	...	118	60 178
Thursday ...	...	421	87 508

From a table of the collections for the charity at each of the three dioceses since 1831, it appears that in seven meetings Hereford has added £5,758 4s. 3d. to the funds, Gloucester £5,012 4s. 10d., and Worcester £6,785 14s. 1d. The collection at the present meeting will, it is believed, amount to £850. On reviewing the festival just terminated we find that it has been, in a musical sense, much on a par with previous occasions. All the singers, except Herr Formes, were English; and it must be admitted, that they gave quite as much satisfaction as if they had been all foreigners. The programmes of the Cathedral performances could hardly have been better selected. Those for the evening in the Shire-hall might have been made more interesting by the introduction of an instrumental solo at each concert, which would have relieved the unbroken monotony of songs, duets, and trios. The human voice is doubtless the most beautiful of musical instruments; but "*vox et preterea nihil*," in lengthy programmes, becomes in the end something like a bore. Night after night the audience were sighing for a piano solo or a concerto on the fiddle; but in vain; Blagrove and Willy obstinately stuck to their places in the orchestra; Mr. Williams's clarinet, Mr. Pratten's flute, Mr. Baumann's bassoon, Mr. Nicholson's oboe, Mr. Jarret's horn, and Mr. Lovell Phillips's violoncello, were only to be heard in the overtures and accompaniments; while ballad after ballad, glee after glee, cavatina after cavatina, assailed the passive ear with a surfeit of sweets that, in the end, lost their flavour. Had Messrs. Amot, Done, and Smith, the respective organists of the Cathedrals of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford, under whose superintendence the musical performances were conducted, but given us St. Sebastian Bach's famous triple concerto for three pianos and orchestra, every one would have been pleased. But no; Mr. Amot confined himself to his organ, Mr. Done to his pianoforte accompaniments, and Mr. Smith to his *baton*. Except the eight-part anthem of Mr. Smith, there has not been a single novelty at this festival, unless *St. Paul* may be regarded in that light. It certainly attracted the largest audience to the Cathedral. The variations in the weather have no doubt in some degree affected the receipts. On Wednesday it rained incessantly from morning to night, which was disastrous to the evening concert and ball, although, strange to say, it did not much injure the morning performance at the Cathedral. Between the present time and the next festival three railroads will have termini in Hereford. How this may influence the meeting, for good or for evil, depends entirely on those who have the management in their hands. The idea of pulling down the orchestra, which at present disfigures the Shire-hall to so little purpose is, we believe, entertained by Mr. Townshend Smith, who has already broached the subject, as we hear, with little opposition. This will be one step in the right direction. The improvements, renovations, &c., in the fine old Cathedral, upon which £20,000 has been expended, and upon which £20,000 more must be expended to make them effective, will be another means of attraction. The best is to be hoped for. If political squabbles and party feeling be

forgotten, and townsmen join with the gentry, clergy, and aristocracy of the country in promoting the common object, there is little fear of the Hereford Festival dying a natural death, after an existence of more than a century and a quarter.

ITALIAN OPERAS IN DUBLIN.

(From the Daily Express.)

September 18.

THE fever of expectation and excitement into which the announcement of first-rate opera music has thrown the good folks of Dublin, reached its climax last night, and found its natural expression in a brilliant and overflowing audience. Every one has been lately saying to every one else, that every one was out of town; yet, despite of this, every one must have found their way to the theatre; for, from the pit to the ceiling, not one unoccupied place was to be discovered; and if the obliging box-keeper could have made "two bodies co-exist in the same place," he would have found numbers anxious to take advantage of his solution of that difficult problem. All arrived, too, in good time, determined not to miss a single note, and to catch *le premier coup d'archet*. Punctual to the hour, accordingly, Mr. Frank Mori took his place as conductor, and the introduction, which takes the place of an overture, commenced. His name is familiar as a good musician and an admirable composer, and he has hereditary claims on the favour of the public, which his careful and steady wielding of the baton seems likely to perpetuate to himself. His accompaniments throughout were well managed; and, with the aid of Mr. Levey's previous training and able leading, the orchestra performed its duty in a most creditable and efficient manner.

After the chorus of "*Bando, bando*," in the *Lucrezia Borgia*, whose stirring *motivo* is familiar to the public in every shape that a popular air is condemned to suffer—by turns immolated on barrel-organs, and twisted into valses—the great object of attraction, the name longest and best known on the stage, and identified with the impassioned representation of the terrible part of *Lucrezia*, Giulia Grisi, stepped from her gondola, the mask on her face—for the scene of the first act lies in Venice—and gracefully received the enthusiastic welcome which a Dublin audience knows so well how to give. Her figure is decidedly improved, and she has lost somewhat of the *embonpoint* that for some years has threatened her appearance, and she is altogether more youthful and *rajeunie*. It would, perhaps, be idle to suppose that her superb voice is perfectly unaffected by the ravages of time, but it is but very rarely that these can be traced, and then only by her sparing some wonted effort or happy flight which the *habitué* will miss. At times she still realizes great effects, as in her prime, and even exhibits that rich, full, musical tone, which more wonderful and modern singers in vain aspire to imitate. Perhaps the very same criticism will apply to Mario, who puts forth as great powers as at any former time, but somewhat husbands his resources, and displays them less frequently.

Grisi's *aria d'entrata*, where she gazes on her son Gennaro, while sleeping, is too well known to require comment. Like all the music in this opera, it is without any high scientific pretension, but is always well suited to the expression of the moment, and fulfils the demands of the dramatic position. The quick movement displayed those forcible and distinct roulades in which Grisi is unrivalled, and made us regret that she gave it but once, and omitted the repeats written in the opera. The duet with Gennaro (Mario) is highly dramatic, in which he relates the story of his birth, unconscious that it is to his trembling mother he tells the tale, while he breathes the accents of an unhallowed passion. The air of "*Di pescatore*" admirably suits the touching tones of his delicious voice. The conclusion of the scene, "*Ama tua Madre*," is at once melodious and impassioned, and should have created a greater sensation in the audience than it appeared to do. The well-known chorus, "*Maffio Orsini*," where the victims of the Borgia surround her, and discover her character to Gennaro, is

a masterpiece of acting and most effective music, closing the first act.

The second should open with the bass song, which, however, was omitted, we cannot tell why; and the Duke, personated by F. Lablache, makes his first entry in the scene with the Duchess. His acting was always excellent, his singing always correct and never in bad taste, though seldom rising to any elevated effects. Lucrezia by turns implores and threatens the Duke to spare Gennaro's life, which his jealous fury refuses, believing him to be Lucrezia's lover. The passage, "Bada, bada," is one of Grisi's masterpieces of passionate declamation. The scene that follows is one of the most highly dramatic in any play. The only choice given the unhappy Lucrezia is whether her son should die by the sword or by poison; she chooses the latter, and has herself to hand him the poisoned goblet. The beautiful trio, "Guai se ti sfuggi," was sung deliciously, and was rapturously encored; and the artists, warming with the applause, eclipsed their first performance. Notes which Mario had taken somewhat tamely in *falsetto*, now rang out with passionate fervour in his splendid chest voice. The Duke then leaves them, and the sudden burst from the unhappy mother—"infelice!"—is one of the most impressive scenes upon the stage. The audience were fairly roused from the coolness of criticism into the enthusiasm of rapturous admiration. It was Grisi, such as she was in her best days, the gifted inspiration of a glorious talent.

In the third act a good deal was omitted, but a song, by Mario, written for him by Lillo, and introduced appropriately, or at least agreeably, was warmly and deservedly encored. The air is simple and touching, and suits the pathetic *timbre* of his voice. In this, too, the *encore* elicited a *la* and *mi* from the chest, not given in the first delivery. In the scene of the banquet, Mdlle. Bertrandi, who acted the part of Orsini, gave the familiar *Brindisi* with excellent effect. It was evidently raised a note to suit her voice, which is a *mezzo soprano*, and not a *contralto*, and which, therefore, is not heard to so much advantage as it will be to-night as Adalgisa in *Norma*. The same remark applies to the first song, "Nella fatal di Rimini," a beautiful snatch, but requiring a command of the lower register. The scene that follows, when Lucrezia enters, and discovers her son amongst those that are poisoned by her command, was the masterpiece of Mario's acting and singing last night, and certainly showed no symptoms of decay. The final air by Grisi, "M'odi, ah m'odi," and the touching melody sung by Mario, when at the moment of death he learns that it is from his mother's hands he receives his doom, and expires in her arms, were of the highest order of deeply affecting dramatic power. The last *motivo* portrays a wild abandonment of grief and frantic desperation, such as Grisi is peculiarly fitted to embody and convey. There is a fearful energy in the invocation, "Sul mio Capo il Cielo s'avventa," that fitly closes the painful interest of so terrible a tale.

We should be unfair if we did not mention the great efficiency gained by Signor Susini's taking the minor part of Guibetta—a laudable example first set by the great Lablache. Susini, in those more trying parts in which we have heard him, exhibits power of a high order, a superb natural voice, good and correct training, and considerable vigour at least, if not always the highest finish. Altogether, every part was creditably sustained, even the faces of Galli and Salabert, so familiar to all *habitués* of the Italian opera, lending their friendly countenance, and aiding the *ensemble*. However musicians may differ in their criticisms as to details, all true lovers of music will agree as to the delightful general result, and will take advantage of an opportunity so rarely afforded here, of obtaining so great an enjoyment.

THE ENGLISH GLEE AND MADRIGAL UNION.—Miss Louisa Pyne, Miss Dolby, Mr. Francis, Mr. Land, and Mr. Frank Bodda.—The engagements for the ensuing fortnight made by Mr. Land, the Honorary Secretary, are at Leicester, Harrowgate, Scarborough, Buxton (second concert, under the patronage of his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, K. G.), Rugby, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, Kendal, Doncaster, Sheffield, Nottingham, and Leamington.

LINES FOR MUSIC.

SOFTLY murmuring River, where
Art thou heedless going?
Whither are thy waters fair,
Through the valley flowing?
Each young wavelet sparkling bright,
Ever joyous seemeth,
Sporting 'neath chaste Luna's light,
When hush'd Nature dreameth.

"I am gliding to the deep
And unfathom'd ocean,—
Like some Pilgrim seeking sleep
After life's commotion;—
And the murmuring sound you hear,
Is but my rippling song,
As I wend my way from care,
To join the Syren throng!"

R. M.

(These words are copyright.)

Reviews of Music.

"POOR PUSSY POLKA"—Composed and dedicated to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. By CARLO MINASI. Jewell and Letchford.

That Mr. Carlo Minasi's original and animated (no pun) polka will be as efficacious in preventing the further torturing of cats in general, we have as little doubt, as that Mrs. Herbert Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" will utterly and completely annihilate the slave trade. We trust, however, that Mr. Carlo Minasi has not insinuated in the Puss Polka, that the gentle sex are cruel to their felines (no pun)—if he have, we shall certainly take up the cudgels (our pens) in their behalf, and belabour the audacious composer with an infinitude of small thumps. Nevertheless, who, we would ask—vide frontispiece—set the horrid trap for poor pussy, and baited it with skim milk in a copper saucepan? a rat-trap bristling with teeth, and stout of spring—backed like a share! No lady, say we. It is proven, and satisfactorily.

Mr. Carlo Minasi caught his idea of a Puss Polka from a poem. The poem is entitled, punningly, a catastrophe. The catastrophe is graphically transferred to the frontispiece by the lithographer, who has beautifully and most naturally represented poor puss in a state of howling agony. No tortures could have been put on paper more smilingly.

The polka, musically speaking, is good—very clever, tripping, and caustic. There is an excellent imitation of a cat's mew in the coda, which brings the piece to a categoric conclusion. *Finis coronat O PUSS!*

"A DELIGHTFUL POLKA"—By the Author of "Poor Pussy Polka" and "The £100 Polka." Published for the Author by Charles Jefferys.

Was Mr. Carlo Minasi ashamed of his polkas, that he would only sanction his name on the frontispiece by implication? or did he think it more poetic and distinguished to suggest his cognomen than write it down in a plain and not to be mistaken manner—even as Lord Shaftesbury, in four consecutive pages, reader, (folio of our tome), while speaking of Aristotle, disdained to call him by his common title, and chose to allude to him as the "Stagyrite," the "profound critic," the "diver into nature," the "imbiber of wisdom," the "great oracle of art," the "master of Plato," the "new apostle," the "clearer of many ways," the "precursor of truth," and many others too numerous to mention. We cannot think, however, that Mr. Carlo Minasi intended to be as singular and quaint of breath as my Lord of Shaftesbury.

The origin of the name of the "Delightful Polka" deserves to be handed down to history. The following is the author's account, as given in the preface:—"The author was playing the piano recently at a party of friends, when, as soon as the dance was

* What dance?—Printers Devil.

ended, some young ladies, well-nigh breathless with pleasure and excitement, exclaimed, with great eagerness, 'What is the name of that?' do tell us! 'What a delightful polka!' He replied that it was not yet published, nor had he hitherto thought of a name for it. 'Oh dear,' said one, 'do let us christen it at once, 'tis such a delightful polka.' 'Why not call it so,' said her fair friend, 'the title would be very apropos, for 'tis a delightful polka—publish it with this title.' The author was but too happy to receive their suggestion, and trusts that the public will sanction its adoption."

It is no disparagement to Mr. Carlo Minasi to say that his music is preferable to his English. "We have no objection to the nomenclature, especially as it was suggested by a "fair friend," and deem the polka every way worthy of the *soubriquet*.

Not content with his prefatorial explanation concerning the origin of the title of his polka, Mr. Carlo Minasi devotes another paragraph to "The effect of dancing a delightful polka." Whether this gratuitous piece of information conveys something serviceable to the polka, or that Mr. Carlo Minasi, proud of his prose, would not willingly let slip the opportunity of having another essay, we cannot decide. Let the reader judge for himself. We would not lose a word of Mr. Carlo Minasi's literary endeavours. Here is par the second:—

"The following day if it so chanced that a lady called, by appointment, upon two of her young friends, who having been at a party on the previous evening overslept themselves. Finding, with astonishment, that they had not risen, she ventured to disturb them in their chamber with the exclamation, 'Oh! you naughty, lazy, good-for-nothing girls! do you know the time?—why 'tis positively two o'clock.' On waking, each regarded her with sleepy eyes, and, yawning, said, 'Oh, did you ever? Shockingly provoking! Pray forgive us, love! We are so dreadfully fatigued! We never danced so much in all our lives—oh! frightfully—but could not help it—'twas such a delightful polka.'"

We are glad to say Mr. Carlo Minasi's Polka required no such bombastic and rignarole puff as the above. We only wonder how a clever writer of music could be so innocent in other matters, and could condescend, to the Moses and Hyam style of self laudation to set off a really meritorious composition of its kind. That the young ladies were enchanted with the polka, over-excited themselves with the polka, over-danced themselves with the polka, and over-slept themselves with the polka, we religiously believe; but we should like to have been told it in appropriate English. The frontispiece is pretty, and happily and neatly executed. We can also recommend the frontispiece.

† Why italics?—Printer's Devil.

‡ No answer at all.—Ditto.

§ Name!—Ditto.

¶ The fair friend.—Ditto.

¶ Following what?—Ditto.

"LA FETE"—Valse—By EDWARD THURNAM. Robert Cocks and Co.

A very pretty set, and capitally varied. This valse carries a recommendation in every page. It is written with great simplicity, so that the most moderate performer may master it.

Dramatic.

To use the well-known phrase of our friends, the clowns, after their periodical absence from the eyes of an admiring public: "Here we are again!" It is a long time since we addressed the readers of the MUSICAL WORLD on things dramatic, but let not Incapacity, either literary, or theatrical, plume itself on that account, that we had what in the vulgar—the very vulgar—tongue, is termed "hooked it" either to the diggins, after the fashion of betting-office keepers, or to that bourne from which, &c. If we were silent, it was not because our critical inkstand was exhausted, or our pen less

pointed than heretofore. The fact is, that most of the theatres were shut, for, as a highly aristocratic cotemporary of ours informed us, London was empty, and, of course, we shall not dare to dispute such high authority. There certainly were some two millions of plebeian inhabitants still remaining, but then, as every well-educated person is aware, they do not count for anything. What are a couple of millions of mere vulgar mortals in the estimation of Louis Napoleon, or the gentleman who does the balls and routs for a fashionable paper? London, therefore, was empty; Belgravia was deserted, and the pavement of Pall-Mall no more resounded beneath the high-heeled boots of heroic but small Guardsmen, or groaned under the vehicled splendour of a Drawing-room day. No one could venture to show himself in the streets if he had the least regard for himself. If he did so, he was completely lost in the estimation of the World—that is, of the ten or eleven thousand beings who constitute the World in their own eyes and those of the West End shopkeepers. A particular friend of ours, whom we visited only yesterday, and who certainly dresses as well and as cheaply as any man in town, seeing that he always employs the most tip-top tradesmen and never pays them, said to us, most emphatically: "My dear fellow, a man can't show himself now—it won't do!" It is impossible to doubt his assertion, at least so far as he is concerned; for we know that he has not so much as left his room for the last month, except, by the way, on Sundays. He made this exception, no doubt, in order to go to church, although some envious persons assert that his appearance in public, on that day only, had something to do with certain small pieces of paper whose virtue ceases on Saturday night and does not return until twelve o'clock A.M. on Monday. There may perhaps be some little truth in this report, as our friend has once already been an inmate of the Queen's Bench. We remember well his telling us, as we were trying to cheer him up by eating a magnificent dinner which he had provided for us—"Ah! my dear boy, life is a grand and mysterious problem, winding up with *quod erat demonstrandum*, which means: quod was to be shown to one, which, as you see, it has been."

In spite, however, of this absence of everybody, some few theatres, it is true, still remained open, but the business was very bad, and there were no novelties produced on which we could exercise those powers of nice perception and critical acumen for which we are so celebrated. We question much whether a new piece every night would have been sufficient to rival the charms of *Cremorne*, and the

Fogs and damps

With the additional ten thousand lamps,

for which Vauxhall is renowned, especially when the public could see at one or other of these rural places of amusement Mr. Green, Madame Poitevin, ponies, horses, and tumblers elevated into the regions of air attached to a balloon. The fact is, that as long as balloons continued to be filled, theatres continued to be quite the reverse. With the production of *Jack Sheppard*, at the Haymarket, matters theatrical took a different turn, and the most densely crowded audiences welcomed back Mrs. Keeley after her recovery from her unfortunate accident. We are happy to say that this charming and most clever actress looks as well as ever she did, and that her talent is, if possible, fresher and more admirable than before. Her delineation of Jack Sheppard is most certainly one of the finest artistic efforts of which the stage can now boast.

As was to be expected, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has furnished

half-a-dozen adaptations for as many theatres. It promises to become as popular as the *Corsican Brothers*. We believe that a version of it will be produced at the Adelphi when that theatre reopens. There is one already in course of representation at the Olympic, where it is very well got up and admirably supported. Mr. Cooke's *Uncle Tom* proves that gentleman to be as capable of drawing tears as of exciting a good hearty laugh. Mr. Hoskins as the slaveowner, was an excellent specimen of Yankee coolness, while Mr. W. Farren, jun. appeared to great advantage as the runaway slave, and was well supported by Mrs. Walter Lacy as his wife. We must not conclude our notice of the piece, without a word of praise to Miss Ellen Turner for her excellent impersonation of the ferryman's shrewish spouse. This young lady has made very great progress in her profession lately, and if she continues as persevering and painstaking as she has hitherto been, will, at some epoch not far remote, find that the appreciation of the Public will open Managers' eyes to her merit.

On Monday last, Mr. Buchanan was to have played Othello at the Marylebone Theatre. Owing to sudden indisposition he was prevented from appearing and Mr. Cowle undertook the part at a moment's notice, an act for which he is certainly entitled to the Manager's thanks. Miss Rochelle, who made her first appearance before a London audience, was the Desdemona. She was evidently labouring under excessive nervousness which is not at all astonishing. Such being the case, it would be unfair to judge her with strict critical severity, and we shall wait until we see her again before we pronounce a decided opinion on her merits. At present it strikes us that when she has gained confidence and experience, she will prove an acquisition. She evidently possesses intelligence as well as a good figure and ladylike appearance, natural advantages, which application and study will doubtless enable her to turn to good account. She was frequently applauded by a house crowded to the ceiling and, at the fall of the curtain, was led on by Mr. Frazer, who played Iago. We should like to see her in comedy. In our opinion her powers are more suited for that, than for Tragedy. She repeated the character of Desdemona on Wednesday, and, on Friday, appeared as Cordelia in *King Lear*, but as we were not present on either of these occasions we cannot give an account of her performance. On the authority of those who were present, however, we may state that she was not nearly so nervous as on the night of her *début*, and, in consequence, acted with far greater energy and produced a very favourable impression.

Original Correspondence.

THE ORGANS AT HAMBURG.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—During a late brief tour among some of the German Organs, made for the purpose of obtaining certain practical information, preparatory to the publication of a small hand-book, on the construction of the organ, I visited, among other places of note, the city of Hamburg, so long and justly celebrated for its thirty-two feet organs.

To these admirable instruments I had the good fortune to gain free access, through the obliging politeness of the respective organists, who kindly afforded me every facility and attention.

On comparing the notes taken at the time with the accounts of the excellent organs above mentioned, published in this country, the latter, I find, to be more or less incorrect or incomplete. I have, therefore, the pleasure this week of forwarding to you more authentic and somewhat fuller particulars respecting one of the three great Hamburg organs that escaped the conflagration of 1847,

under the impression that they may prove far from interesting to the numerous organists and organ builders who weekly peruse the columns of the *Musical World*.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

EDWARD T. HOPKINS.

69, Tachbrook Street, Warwick Square,
September 21, 1852.

THE CHURCH AND ORGAN OF ST. MICHAEL'S, HAMBURG.

The old church of St. Michael being struck by lightning and burnt down, the present edifice was commenced in 1750, from the designs of Mr. Ernst George Sonnin, and opened for service in 1762. The height of the church inside is 93 feet, its length 249 feet, and its breadth 178 feet. The organ stands at the west end and contains the following stops:—

Great Organ.		Choir Organ.	
1. Principal, tin	16 feet.	1. Roluflote, wood	
2. Quintadena, wood		and metal	16 ft. tone.
and metal	16 "	2. Principal, tin	8 feet.
3. Octave, tin	8 "	3. Principal to fiddle, G	8 "
4. Gadic, wood and		4. Roluflote, metal	8 "
metal	8 "	5. Flauto Prayerso	
5. Gamba, tin	8 "	wood	8 "
6. Gemshorn, metal	8 "	6. Klein Gedact,	
7. Quint, tin	5½ "	wood	8 "
8. Octave, tin	4 "	7. Octave, tin	4 "
9. Gemshorn, metal	4 "	8. Roluflote, metal	4 "
10. Nasat, metal	2½ "	9. Nasat, tin	2½ "
11. Octave, tin	2 "	10. Octave, tin	2 "
12. Rauschpfeif, 2 ranks,		11. Flach-flöte me-	
tin	2½ "	tal	2 "
13. Mixture, 8 ranks,		12. Quint, tin	1½ "
tin	2 "	13. Rauschpfeif, 2	
14. Scharf, 5 ranks, tin	1½ "	ranks, tin	2½ "
15. Cornet, 5 ranks, tin	8 "	14. Cymbal, 5 ranks,	
16. Trompete, tin	16 "	tin	
17. Trompete, tin	8 "	15. Chalameau, tin	8 "
18. Oboe, from tenor		16. Trompete, tin	4 "
F, tin	8 "		

Upper-work and Swell on the same
Manual.

Upper-work.

Upper-work.		Pedal.	
1. Bourdon, wood	16 ft. tone	1. Principal, tin	32 feet.
and metal		2. Sub-bass, wood	32 "
2. Principal, tin	8 feet.	3. Principal, tin	16 "
3. Quintadena, wood		4. Sub-bass, open	
and metal	8 "	wood	16 "
4. Spitzflöte, metal	8 "	5. Sub-bass, stopped	
5. Unda maris, to		wood	16 "
fiddle G	8 "	6. Violin, wood	16 "
6. Octave, tin	4 "	7. Rolu-quint, metal	10½ "
7. Spitzflöte, metal	4 "	8. Octave, tin	8 "
8. Quint, tin	2½ "	9. Gedact, tin	8 "
9. Octave, tin	2 "	10. Octave, tin	4 "
10. Rauschpfeif, 2		11. Mixture, tin, 10	
ranks, tin	2½ "	ranks	
11. Cymbal, 5 ranks,		12. Posaune, tin	32 "
tin	1½ "	13. Posaune, tin	16 "
12. Echo cornet to		14. Fagotto	16 "
fiddle G, 5		15. Trompete, tin	8 "
ranks	8 "	16. Clarino, tin	4 "
13. Trompete	8 "		
14. Vox humana, tin	8 "		
15. Cremona to			
tenor F	8 "		
16. Glockenspiel to			
tenor F	8 "		

Swell.		Subsidiary Stops.	
17. Octave	8 "	Tremulant to great manual.	
18. Octave	4 "	Cymbalstar.	
19. Cornet, 5 ranks		Wind to great organ.	
in the treble,		Wind to choir organ.	
2 in the bass.		Wind to upper-work.	
20. Trompete.	8 "	Wind to pedal organ.	

Summary of Stops.

Great,	...	...	18
Choir,	...	...	16
Upperwork	...	...	20
Pedal	...	...	16

Total ... 70

The case presents a handsome front, sixty feet in height, and sixty feet in width. The thirty-two feet pipe stands in the centre by itself, in an immense pilaster, the remainder of the thirty-two feet stop in two great concave compartments, one on each side, and every pipe is supported below by a base, and finished off above with a Corinthian capital, gilded, the pipes themselves forming the shafts, being of their natural bright silvery colour.

The organ is finely laid out inside, in four stories, to each of which free access is obtained by wide staircases with hand-rails. Passage-boards occur in abundance; and any pipe in this immense instrument can be got at without disturbing a second one.

There are no "conveyanced-off" pipes, except those which appear in the front of the case, the site of the organ being so favourable as to allow of the sound-boards being made of ample dimensions.

Those of the great organ are made "in halves," each half measuring from eight and a-half to nine feet in length, and the pipes of every stop stand in a single row, even to the sixteen feet double trumpet.

The C C C C pipe in the middle of the front is made of pure tin, is thirty-five six inches in length, weighs upwards of 960 pounds, is twenty-inches in diameter, and the body was cast in one sheet.

The diameter of the thirty-two feet posauze is sixteen inches at the bell, and of the sixteen feet posauze, ten inches. A light sieve of metal wire, with wide meshes, placed over the bell of each of the large reed-pipes, keeps out the birds, a most necessary and excellent precaution. The tops of a great portion of the large metal pipes also have an addition that is by no means common. This consists of a sliding cylinder, introduced to aid the process of tuning, which is drawn up or pressed down according as the pitch of the pipe may require flattening or sharpening. The top of the pipe is further covered with leather outside, to prevent the cylinder slipping. None of the pipes are pressed out of shape, none present bent or ragged tops, as is too frequently the case in English organs, but all preserve their symmetry of outline.

Silberman, the celebrated organ builder, of Dresden, was invited to construct the new St. Michael's organ, which invitation he accepted, but dying shortly afterwards, the execution of the work was entrusted to his principal workman, Hildebrand. This was about the year 1768. T. Mattheson, the celebrated composer and theorist, left by will £4000 towards paying for this organ, which sum, however, did not nearly equal the amount expended in its fabrication.

THE BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.—DR. WESLEY'S ANTHEM, &c.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—At the Birmingham Musical Festival last week, which is generally acknowledged to have been one of the most successful, both in a musical and a pecuniary point of view, which has ever taken place either in the metropolis or in the provinces, an anthem, or motet, by Dr. Wesley, was performed, entitled "The wilderness and the solitary places," which had been selected by the committee as the only English sacred composition to be introduced on the important occasion,—a compliment to our "chief organist," as well merited as it was judicious and considerate. I undertook

a pilgrimage to Birmingham, chiefly to hear this anthem, now so well known, from its frequent performance at various cathedrals and parish churches, under the direction of its talented composer, and which has become such a general favourite, that I think a few remarks on the adverse and untenable criticisms which have appeared in some of the morning papers respecting this remarkable work may not be uninteresting to that increasing section of our community, who practise or patronise music in a loving spirit.

In the composition of this anthem, Dr. Wesley has certainly departed from the dry conventional course invariably adopted by both ancient and modern ecclesiastical composers: he has marked out a path of his own, and displayed in every part of the work the utmost originality both of form and execution. It is true that in this, as well as in most of his other compositions, the doctor has freely employed the chromatic style of harmony, and his modulations are often sudden and very bold; but it must be borne in mind, that these extraneous harmonies are never used without producing the most striking, and often the most beautiful effects; and they help, moreover, in spite of what the *Times* says, to give a true expression to the sublime text (Isaiah 35) which it is intended to illustrate. The anthem is divided into four parts, and consists of a quartet, solo, recitative, quartet, and chorus. It was composed, I believe, when Dr. Wesley was organist of Hereford Cathedral, at a time when he produced some of his freshest and most agreeable compositions. The elaborate and highly finished accompaniment to the whole anthem has always been regarded, both by musicians and cultivated amateurs, as containing some novel orchestral effects, which would "tell" most brilliantly if adapted for a full band. This view of the work has proved correct. Though only an adaptation (and adaptations, like translations, are rarely successful) from the organ part, yet the accompaniments, as given at the Birmingham Festival, are written in the most felicitous style for all the instruments, and in some points, such as at the passage "For in the wilderness shall waters flow out," where the oboes, flutes, and horns are freely used, the effects are not only clever and original, but remarkably striking and beautiful. Again, in the fine declamatory bass solo, "Say to them of a fearful heart," (well sung by Herr Fornes), the employment of the double basses (though not in my opinion equal in effect to a set of freely speaking thirty-two feet pedal pipes in an organ), and the introduction of the horns (in lieu of the "reeds" marked in the organ part), were happily executed, and produced the desired result. It is, however, in the vocal portion of the anthem where Dr. Wesley shines most. Whether we look to the beautiful melodic and graceful passages to the words, "It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing;" and again, at the inimitable and expressive quartet with which the work closes, "And sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" whether we regard its ingenious and brilliant part writing as evidenced in the semi-chorus, "For in the wilderness shall waters flow," and again in the learned fugue on two subjects, with its gorgeous closing harmonies, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return;" or whether we consider the forcible and expressive recitative, "Then shall the lame man leap as a hart,"—in all these points the anthem must be regarded by every sound reflecting musician as one of the most extraordinary and beautiful sacred compositions which has ever issued from the pen of an English composer.

To the astonishment, however, of many musical men who are well acquainted with the intrinsic merits of the score, the *Times* reporter (whose clever criticisms generally are the admiration of all who read them), the musical reviewer in the *Athenæum*, and one or two other distinguished critics, have, after once hearing this important work imperfectly executed, pronounced a severe judgment upon it. The *Times* speaks of the "dry elaboration of the anthem," and that it is deficient in melody, confused in harmony and part writing,—full of intricate combinations and "modulation run mad." In answer to this opinion, I will merely observe, that it is quite contrary to that expressed by the immortal Mendelssohn, and by the greatest living composer, Spohr; when this work, with several others, was submitted to their inspection a few years ago, on the occasion of Dr. Wesley's anticipated appointment to the chair at Edinburgh.

The *Athenæum*, with a most inexcusable forgetfulness of the celebrity of the author, says the anthem was nothing more nor less than a "dry, pedantic exercise, not likely to be again heard of!" But, marvel of marvels, the work not only has often been, and will again and again be heard, and heard of, but it already lives in the hearts and souls of thousands of her Majesty's music-loving subjects. Its lovely strains of melody, and its rich, gorgeous harmonies are as familiar as household words to the numberless congregations who, in Hereford and Exeter Cathedrals, and at the Leeds Parish Church, have so often listened to its performance with, I may venture to say, as much profit from its clear and elevated elucidation of the text, as from its intrinsic merits as a musical composition.

I may mention that several other works were sent in to the Birmingham Committee by Dr. Wesley, but they preferred "The Wilderness," composed eighteen years ago, to any of the doctor's later efforts.

With regard to the performance itself, it was on the whole certainly unsteady and unsatisfactory, though nothing could be finer than the singing of the matchless quartet, Madame Clara Novello, Miss Williams, Mr. Lockey, and Herr Formes in the concerted parts, especially in the lovely concluding piece, "And sorrow and sighing shall flee away." It must be admitted by all honest critics, that there was a want of spirit and decision in the doctor's conducting of his own work, occasioned, I have no doubt, by extreme nervousness, which greatly militated against its success.

Permit me, in conclusion, to express a hope, that the usually accurate *Times* reporter will secure and inspect a score of the learned doctor's anthems as soon as possible, and "our dukedom to a beggarly denier," he will, with the liberality befitting his elevated and powerful position, acknowledge the error into which he has fallen, and pronounce the ecclesiastical compositions of Samuel Sebastian Wesley worthy of the venerated name he bears, and equal, if not superior, to any similar works which have yet appeared in this country.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM SPARK.

Park Square, Leeds, Sept. 24, 1852.

FOREIGN RESUME.

PARIS.—The pieces represented at the Grand Opera since our last have been *William Tell*, the *Prophète*, the *Juif Errant*, and *Robert the Devil*.

Mademoiselle Emmy La Grua was prevented, by a slight indisposition from repeating her part of Alice.

Fanny Cerito is engaged at the Grand Opera. Some say that her engagement is for two years, while others assert that it is only for four months. There is one thing, however, certain. She is charged with the principal character in the new ballet which Mazillier will put on the stage, and for which Adolphe Adam will write the music.

Mademoiselle Plunkett has just broken her engagement at the Grand Opera. It is very much feared that Mademoiselle Regina Forli will follow her example.

It is reported that Mademoiselle Duez, who was *prima donna* last year at the Opéra National, is engaged at the Grand Opera.

At the Opéra Comique the entertainments for the week just passed have consisted of *Le Père Gaillard*, *La Croix de Marie*, *Joseph*, *Giralda*, *Le Fidéle Berger*, and *Madelon*.

A new one-act opera by Messieurs Carré and Barbier, is in rehearsal at the Opéra Comique. It is entitled *Les Noces de Jeannette*. Monsieur Victor Massé has composed the music.

This winter there will be a French theatre in eleven different towns out of France. These are the Hague, Amster-

dam, Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, Madrid, London, St. Petersburg, Odessa, and Copenhagen.

Monsieur Mérelli, the manager of the Imperial Opera-house of Vienna, has just engaged Mademoiselle Sophie Cruvelli for the season which commences about the end of next March.

Mademoiselle Wagner is at Berlin. On the 10th of this month she made her *rentrée* in *I Capuletti*.

A new musical society is now in course of formation in Paris, under the direction of Mons. A. Farrenc. It is to be called *La Société Symphonique*. The director has already engaged fifty artists of the first ability. The orchestra will be directed by Mons. Mas, of the *Théâtre Italien*. The society will give six performances, in which will be heard the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Spohr, and other masters; a selection of overtures by the same composers, as well as by Méhul, Cherubini, Weber, and Hummel; pieces for the piano by Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Weber, and Hummel, and for the violin by Viotti, Kreutzer, Rode, and other celebrities. The vocal department will be entrusted to artists of acknowledged talent. The first concert is fixed for Friday, the 24th December, at eight o'clock, p. m., and the second for Friday, the 14th January, 1853. The others will be given fortnightly in the Salle Herz.

Provincial.

LIVERPOOL.—One of the most brilliant concerts ever given by the Philharmonic Society took place on Tuesday evening week, when the Hall, although the prices had been raised, was filled by a very numerous and fashionable assembly. The great attraction of the concert was Signor Mario, who, on this occasion, gave us no reason to believe that his unequalled vocal powers were in any way impaired. We never heard him sing with more feeling, grace, fervour, or passion, and the enthusiasm he created was fully merited. He was twice encoored, and compelled to repeat "Com é gentil," which he sang in answer to an encore loudly called for, after the *pastorale* from the *Prophète*. "Un impero soave." There can be no doubt that to this day Mario is in every way the first of tenors, and for the sake of art we hope he will long keep so. Grisi's voice has lost little or nothing of its sympathetic sweetness. Grisi has long been a deserved favourite with the British public, and it seems at times she can sing as well as ever if she likes. All who have heard her sing "Com é bello" in London, and compare it with her performance of the same air in the Philharmonic Hall, will doubtless bear us out in our remarks. Mdlle. Bertrandi, who was heard in Liverpool for the first time, is a young and promising singer. She has been taught in a good school, possesses a fine clear soprano voice, and, when she gains courage and experience, will, doubtless, be a most pleasing and useful *seconda donna*. The other vocalists were Signora Galvani, Susini, and F. Lablache. Signor Galvani is a young tenor, with a good style, but a hard voice, which he produces from the head instead of the chest. As yet he is nervous and uncertain, and sadly in want of practice to mature the talents he evidently possesses. He sings with passion and expression, and was frequently applauded. Signors Susini and F. Lablache were of great utility in the concerted pieces. The chorus sang two madrigals very finely, and the band, though far from being faultless, played two overtures of Mendelssohn's, and one of Boildieu's, in careful style.

During the week Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Mr. Buckstone have been playing before crowded houses at the Amphitheatre, in several amusing pieces, both of comedy and farce. On Friday night they took a joint benefit, when Mr. Buckstone's comedies of *Single Life* and *Married Life* were performed, and, if we may judge from the repeated applause and hearty laughter of the audience, to the satisfaction of all present. We are glad to see Mr. Copeland has been enabled to secure the services of our popular and laughter-

provoking friends for this week. An attractive bill of fare is provided.

SUNDERLAND.—The success of the performance of the *Messiah* at the grand Musical Festival given at the Lyceum, on Monday last, exceeded our sanguine anticipations, and marks an epoch in the musical history of Sunderland. Many were the conjectures as to the probable number of persons present. The building was filled to overflowing in every part, by a highly discriminative audience, composed of the principal inhabitants of Sunderland and the neighbourhood. The general appearance of the Hall, with its tier upon tier of happy and expectant faces, and the large number of elegantly-attired ladies who graced the scene by their presence, produced an effect that will be long remembered by those who had the gratification of witnessing it. The orchestra numbered nearly three hundred performers. The organ, somewhat small for the size of the room, is a powerful and fine-toned instrument. It was played by Mr. Vincent of Houghton-le-Spring, in a manner that proclaimed him to be a musician. Among the instrumental performers, were the best talent of Sunderland and Newcastle. The chorus was augmented by large and valuable accessions from the Philharmonic and Sacred Societies of Newcastle. So great was the interest manifested, that the Lyceum was besieged by eager crowds, long before the time of commencing, and many hundreds were unable to obtain admission. In good time, Mr. Beswick, the conductor, made his baton descend for the commencement of the overture, which was performed in a masterly manner, and listened to with profound attention. The opening recitative, "Comfort ye my people," and the air, "Every valley," were sung by Mr. Ashton, from Durham Cathedral, with good effect; the instrumental accompaniments, however, were rather too powerful. The joyful chorus, "And the glory of the Lord," which immediately followed, was given with spirit and precision by the united choruses of Sunderland, Newcastle, Durham, and Houghton-le-Spring, and produced, with the organ and instruments, a powerful and magnificent effect. The recitative, "Thus saith the Lord," and the air, "But you may abide," were given by Mr. R. Ferry, of Sunderland, in a manner that did him great credit. His voice is a rich barytone, of good compass and power, and would have been heard to still greater advantage, had the accompaniments been judiciously softened. The grand chorus, "And he shall purify," which followed, was sung in excellent time, and its difficult passages executed with precision and smoothness. Miss Gibbs, on rising to sing "Behold a virgin," and "O, thou that tellest," was warmly received by the audience. Her voice is good, and particularly mellow in the lower register, but the pronunciation was not unexceptionable. "For behold darkness," and "The people that walked in darkness," were admirably sung by Mr. R. Ferry, whose scrupulous adherence to the text, must have satisfied the most devoted of Handel's admirers. The well-known and justly admired chorus, "For unto us a child is born," was given with great power, and drew forth considerable applause, on the subsidence of which, there was a rustling of programmes, and expectation was on tiptoe to hear Miss Alleyne, whose name appeared to the four recitations that followed. This lady's voice is a fine soprano, powerful, yet sweet, and of great compass, reaching easily to A and B flat in alt. Her execution of these difficult recitations produced a very favourable impression of her vocal talent. The fine chorus, "Glory to God," having been given, and in a masterly manner, Miss Alleyne sang, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion," with a brilliancy and joyousness in perfect harmony with the words and music. The beautiful air, "He shall feed his flock," was feelingly sung by Miss Gibbs, and the first part of the Oratorio was concluded with a successful performance of the rather difficult chorus, "His yoke is easy." In the second part, a Gentleman Amateur from Newcastle, gave "Thy rebuke," and "Behold! and see," with some ability, and at the same time, considerable indecision. In subsequent pieces he acquitted himself in a manner much to be commended. Mr. W. Ferry, of Gateshead, who was much applauded, executed "Why do the nations," in a style that called forth a unanimous encore, which he gratified. A similar compliment was paid to the performance of the majestic Hallelujah chorus, the audience, according to established usage, rising from their seats. In the

recitative and air, "Behold! I tell you," and "The trumpet shall sound," Mr. R. Ferry, and Mr. Hall, who played the critical trumpet obligato, acquitted themselves so as to deserve the highest commendation. The oratorio concluded with "Worthy is the Lamb," and the "Amen" choruses, the audience standing and remaining undisturbed to its termination. The whole performance and arrangements were such as to reflect infinite credit on Mr. Beswick, the talented conductor, and Messrs. Bourne, Ferry, Dewar, and other gentlemen, who used their exertions to promote its success. —*Sunderland News.*

WINCHESTER.—A piece of plate has recently been presented by some members of the Devon and Cornwall Philharmonic Society to Mr. J. Smyth, Bandmaster of the 19th Regiment, as a mark of their high appreciation of his talent and energy as conductor of their concerts during the first season, 1861-2. The annual general meeting of this society has been held, and a report read, in which also the valuable assistance afforded by Mr. Smyth has been referred to in terms of high commendation. The splendid band of the 19th Regiment, which has been some years under Mr. Smyth's charge, assisted materially in the concerts of the Society. The number of men who performed on stringed instruments were of essential service; they were always freely permitted to attend the meetings by the kindness of Colonel Hay, and their good training and orderly conduct were very conspicuous.

HARROGATE.—Mrs. Alexander Newton sang at Mrs. Gordon's Grand Benefit Evening Concert, at the Royal Cheltenham Pump Rooms, Harrogate, on Saturday last, the 18th instant. She was engaged in the "Ah non creden," and "Ah non giunge," from *Sonnambula*, as well as in the old Scotch ballad, "Ye that walk in silk attire." The room was only tolerably filled, in consequence of the inclemency of the night.

PLYMOUTH.—(From our own Correspondent.)—Never since Mr. Newcombe has been Lessee has he been so fortunate (with every inclination on his part to accomplish so desirable an end) as to bring together so talented a company as is now to be found within the walls of his theatre. On Tuesday and Wednesday *The Corsican Brothers* was performed to well filled and fashionable houses, the twin brothers being personated by Mr. King. Nothing could exceed the carefulness and eager efforts of this gentleman in his acting, which was full of dramatic effect; while the natural feeling with which he imbued the part throughout—more particularly during the scene of the apparition—was worthy of the highest commendation. I thoroughly agree with the Dublin critics who have already stamped this gentleman as an artist of first-rate promising abilities. In the absence of Mr. Wigan there are few indeed on the stage who could have played Chateau Renaud better than Mr. Davis. The part was forcibly and aptly rendered, and in the fencing scene and struggle in the last act, the deathlike stillness which reigned throughout the theatre, and the hearty plaudits that followed its conclusion, clearly showed how completely the two artistes had riveted the attention of the audience. The Corsican peasants were creditably acted by Messrs. Herbert and Lloyds, and the "make up" of the former was quite unique and picturesque. Mrs. Parker played Madame Savilia dei Franchi (a part infinitely beneath her here-acknowledged talents) with ease and dignity; and Emilie de Lesparre found a comely and befitting representative in Miss Page. In the *Bal Masque* the *famille Leclercq* danced with superabundant buoyancy and spirit, and added much to the hilarity of the scene. The *Corsican Brothers* has been admirably put on the stage in every respect; and the mechanism was worked with the greatest precision. It is worthy of remark that the great outlay which Mr. Newcombe has made has been liberally responded to by the inhabitants of the town. On Thursday, the *Lady of Lyons* was repeated, by desire, to a very full house; the Claude Melnotte of Mr. King the previous week having created a marked sensation, hitherto unknown in the theatrical circles of Plymouth. Indeed I am free to confess that I consider it one of the actor's most able and finished performances. The cottage scene displayed an excellent acquaintance with his art, and, hacknied as this play has been, there was not a dry eye in the boxes. The power of depicting natural feeling without exaggeration is a great point in this artist's acting. Miss Fanny Huddart played Pauline with considerable skill and ability,

but should throw a little more *abandon* into her acting. I look with much pleasure and impatience to see her Lady Macbeth, which I am told is something rare and curious. Damas, by Mr. Warde, was a very clever performance, and the same remark holds good as to Mr. Davis's Beauseant, as I made in reference to his acting Chateau Renaud in the *Corsican Brothers*. Mrs. Parker played Madame Deschappels as few other actresses could since, perhaps, the days of Mrs. W. Clifford. It was done to a turn, and her dresses were more like those of a masked ball introduced in real life, than intended for the stage—which, by the way, they should not. Encouraged by the success attending "the legitimate," on Friday *The Hunchback* was performed to another excellent house. Mr. King lost none of the laurels he had gained by his excellent delineation of Master Walter; and Mr. Newcombe, whose reception showed the estimation in which he is held by the Plymouth public, played Modus capitally. The dry, quaint humour of the student was admirably portrayed, and Mr. Newcombe carried out the intention of the author in every respect. Miss M. Oliver met with well-merited applause in Helen. With such an actress as Miss Oliver—and I doubt whether Modus did ever see such a pair of eyes before—the part of Helen, so to speak, plays itself—too much *acting* would mar the fun and wit of the author, and this was nicely observed by the charming Miss O., whose initial letter is a synonyme for a sigh. Clifford was in the hands of Mr. Davis, and he played it with gentlemanlike ease, while funny Fathom had an able representative in Mr. Miles, and Miss Page's Julia gave general satisfaction, but the fair artist shines more in comedy than tragedy. Nothing can be better than the manner in which pieces are put on the stage. Mr. Kimber, the Prompter at the Lyceum, holds the same office here, and his able suggestions are carried out in every particular by the persons engaged in the arrangement of the stage, and while sitting in the boxes one can hardly imagine that one is in a provincial theatre. The orchestra, with Mr. Reed as its chef, is admirably conducted.

CHARLES.

Miscellaneous.

JULLIEN'S NEW OPERA, "PIETRO IL GRANDE."—When the prospectus of the 1852 season of the Royal Italian Opera was issued, the public were surprised and delighted to see amongst the novelties announced a grand opera, by M. Jullien. Many who only knew Jullien as a mere composer of dance music shook their heads and sagaciously prophesied a failure; but other far-seeing people, who were aware that Jullien was the composer, under various *noms de guerre*, of several charming ballads, songs, and other vocal compositions, were sanguine about the result—for Jullien never promised anything which did not take place and create a sensation. From various causes, *Pietro il Grande* was postponed till the last week of the worst musical season that has been known for years past, and, unfortunately, it was nearly damned the first night; yet, when judiciously curtailed, all the critics spoke of it in the highest terms, and the public, who very properly believe in Jullien, flocked in crowds to see it, and applauded it to the echo. Many who went to scoff remained to praise, and there is little doubt but that *Pietro il Grande* will be a standard work at the Royal Italian Opera, and the forerunner of many better things to come. As yet, the whole opera is not published, but the publishers have sent us some of the principal vocal and instrumental (ballet) airs, which have been arranged for the pianoforte. Of course, from these detached *morceaux*, we can form but a poor opinion of the merits of the opera; but the most careless listener to them cannot but be struck with the versatility of the composer's talent—for there runs through each a vein of originality and dramatic feeling for which few would give him credit, while the melodies sound fresh and spontaneous; and, though some of the airs appear to us to be too long, we think that the greater portion of them will soon become "familiar as household words"—for who that cares for music does not know Jullien, and feel a natural desire to learn how he succeeds in his new walk of art. The air which promises to obtain the most universal popularity is founded on the Russian national hymn.

As sung by Tamberlik, "*Di Moscovia eletti figli*" must have created a great sensation. The air is broad, catching, and massive, and, when sung by an artist with a fine voice, the effect must be wonderful. A strong contrast to this, is a melodious solo for *Peter*—"Capanna umil"—the melody of which is sweet and flowing, as is, also, an air for *Catherine*, "*Omio Gentil*." "A si tu m'ami," a sentimental air for *Peter*, is Donizettish and voluptuous—and one entitled "O ciel d'un afflito," for the soprano, full of pathos and feeling, and arranged in masterly style for the display of a fine voice. The bass song, "*Dell'armi il suon*" is a most original and vigorous composition, in the style of Meyerbeer, yet no servile imitation of the compositions of that great master. It is exactly suited to the style of *Formes*, who sang it with great effect. We need not allude to the other pieces published, but each will bear a most critical hearing; and though we do not say that all are good or worthy of Jullien, yet we have seen no grand opera produced during the last few years which contains so many airs likely to achieve deserved popularity as *Pietro il Grande*. We may, however, advise our readers to try the Brindisi, "*Le passate ore scordiam*," and a clever madrigal. In the ballet music, Jullien need fear no rival. The Mazurka is in his happiest style—a sparkling, joyous melody, which will, we think, set many heads and feet in motion during the ensuing winter. The Valse Hollandaise, the Polonaise, the Pas des Marins, and the Varsoviennne Schottische are all what sailors call "first-rate," and well worthy of comparison with any similar *morceaux* from the composer's pen. In conclusion, we candidly confess that Jullien, as an operatic writer, has not only surprised but delighted us—for reasons which any one who listens to the music of *Pietro il Grande* will appreciate; and we, in common with his "million" admirers, will rejoice to hear, next season, that one of the promised attractions at Covent Garden will be another new opera, by the clever composer of *Pietro il Grande*.—*Liverpool Mail*.

SURREY THEATRE.—This theatre closed on Monday se'night Mr. Balfé's opera ran its merry round to the forty-ninth night, and closed the theatre with an *ecclat* that could hardly have been anticipated from the doubtful success with which the season opened.

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